

Board Communique: August 2018

The Energy Consumers Australia (ECA) Board met in Sydney on 16 August 2018.

Board Stakeholder Forum

The Board meeting was preceded by a Stakeholder Forum on 15 August. The forum received presentations from:

- The Centre for Energy & Environmental Markets' (UNSW) Tariff Tool - Ian MacGill, Joint Director
- The impacts of energy costs on the Australian Agriculture Sector, Kate McRobert, General Manager, Anne Laurie Research Officer, Australian Farm Institute.

Following the presentations, the ECA Board and staff heard from the broad range of NSW stakeholders in attendance about their key energy market concerns, including:

- Access to consumer energy data. The discussion focussed on the importance of inclusion and accessibility. The Foresighting Forum 2019 will explore Consumer Data issues.
- The importance of sector specific research on the impacts of energy prices in providing an evidence base for policy work.
- The need to explore better responses to housing quality and appliance efficiency standards.
- The forthcoming case studies on Small Business energy price outcomes.

Reference Committee

The Board's Reference Committee met to discuss the ACCC Final Report into Electricity Pricing. The Report makes a number of recommendations across the electricity supply chain. Members of the Committee focused on the issues of most significance in their work. The Committee expressed strong interest in taking forward the work of the ACCC to reduce electricity prices for consumers.

Board Meeting

The Board discussed the recent Energy Council meeting and the decisions on the National Energy Guarantee, the ACCC Report, the Consumer Data Right and the Integrated System Plan.

The Board reviewed ECA's Draft Business Plan and 3-year Budget for 2019-2020 in the context of ECA Advocacy Principles which focus on energy services which are affordable, individualized and optimised.

The Board reviewed the Draft Annual Report 2017-2018 and the achievements of the preceding year which included an increase in the competitiveness of the ECA Grant Program, the increased focus on Consumer Engagement and innovation in regulatory processes and the Energy Consumer Sentiment Survey findings on consumer dissatisfaction with value for money and interest in information and tools to help manage energy costs down.

Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held in Bundaberg on 13 September 2018.